

TESTIMONY Submitted by  
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Norwalk Hospital  
To the Public Health Committee  
Monday, March 1, 2010

SB 248, An Act Concerning Adverse Events At Hospitals And Outpatient  
Surgical Facilities

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to SB 248, An Act Concerning Adverse Events at Hospitals and Outpatient Surgical Facilities.

Norwalk Hospital opposes the bill as the changes it proposes to the adverse event reporting system do not improve the quality of care or patient safety. It's important to have a system that fosters patient safety by having confidential reporting of adverse events in a non-punitive environment.

Norwalk Hospital has worked hard to encourage reporting as a cornerstone of our strong culture of safety. Our commitment to quality and patient safety is proven through our achievements:

- Norwalk Hospital is ranked among top 5% of hospitals nationally in quality, patient safety and low mortality rate (Forbes Magazine, 2010).
- Norwalk Hospital's mortality rate declined to 1.5% in 2009 which is amongst the lowest in the state, region and nation.
- Norwalk Hospital is ranked among the best 3% of hospitals nationally in terms of medication error rates: A computerized physician order entry (CPOE) system to enable physicians to electronically enter patient medications and treatments, along with wireless voice communication for clinicians and bedside electronic patient identification with bar coding for drug administration have led to a decrease in medication errors from 12.8% in 2006 to 2.8% at the end of 2009.
- Pressure ulcers dropped from 6% in 2006 to 1.7% at the end of 2009, well below state and national standards.
- Norwalk Hospital's Intensive Care Unit received the prestigious Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence recognizing the nation's top hospital critical care units last year – for the third time!
- Norwalk Hospital achieved near perfect scores for Medicare's "Alliance Measures," which gauge improvements in clinical outcomes.

We don't feel that the change in legislation will promote improvement in processes and outcomes. We support spending our valuable capital and human resources to collaborate on evidence-based methodologies that have been proven to reduce mortality, morbidity, and complications. Time and money spent on punitive actions takes away from those endeavors. A recent Forbes article notes that Connecticut is among the top 5% of states with high performing hospitals in terms of quality.

Norwalk Hospital welcomes the opportunity to work in collaboration with the State to set precedents to help hospitals improve, particularly if there has been an event.

Thank you for consideration of our position.